

come often to God for a new supply of grace. We do this in our daily spiritual devotions—we need a new supply for every day, for yesterday's grace will not carry us thru today's experiences. But one purpose of the Sabbath is to give us a larger opportunity for waiting upon the Lord in the services of the church, to get afresh in our heart the thought of God and of our duty, and to receive new supplies of power from Christ. This we do as we hear God speak to us in his word, as we bow before him in prayer, as we sing the hymns of praise and are lifted up on their strains, and as we touch other lives and get encouragements and inspiration from Christian fellowship. The Sabbath services should fit us for the week of toil and duty.

"I asked for strength; for with the noontide heat I fainted, while the reapers, singing sweet,
Went forward with ripe sheaves I could not bear.
Then came the Master, with his blood-stained feet,
And lifted me with sympathetic care.
Then on his arm I leaned till all was done,
And I stood with the rest, at set of sun,
My task complete."

There is great help also in the Christian activities to which the church introduces us. Work is the best means of grace. There is no other way in which we can grow so wholesomely as in work. The way to develop our talents is by trading with them. The church sets tasks and duties for us. It calls us to a ministry of helpfulness. It sends us out to be good Samaritans to relieve distress. It sets us down before a class as a teacher. It asks us for our money to be used in carrying on the work of Christ. It inspires us to all manner of service in behalf of others. Thus it provides for us opportunities for the development of our powers, so that our two talents of capacity increase to four.

These are suggestions of the meaning of the church as a helper in our spiritual life, and of the way we may get from it the blessings it has for us.

When Christianity Seems to Fail

Selected

It is not strange that Christianity seems to be a failure in many cases. The religious experiences of many church members is unsatisfactory. They do not know God. They do not know whether the Bible is true or not. They do not enjoy fellowship with God. They have not entered into rest, but into restlessness. They are not happy, but unhappy. They are not strong, but weak. The lives of many professors of religion are a disappointment. They are not the light of the world nor the salt of the earth. They do not recommend religion to those who are without by their word and spirit. Many who witness the spirit which they manifest and see their conduct, are not attracted to Christ thereby, but rather repelled and constrained to say that they do not want such religion. Why is this so?

It is because these professing Christians do not obey the truth. They do not keep

the commandments. They do not repent of their sins, nor pray, nor search the Scriptures daily, nor love their brethren, nor love their enemies. They do not forgive their enemies. They do not try to keep the commandments of God and are not willing to keep them. Christianity is a failure in many cases, just as agriculture is a failure. It is a failure as education and marriage and civil government are failures. Everything is a failure when it is not built on the foundation of God's truth and carried on according to His commandments.

Imagine one going to a florist and inquiring for a plant which will yield a luxurious bloom and fill the room with sweetest fragrance. The florist offers him one which he thinks will meet the requirements. He shows him a picture of the flower it will bear. He shows him a specimen of the plant in full bloom and says, "This is what it will do." He is pleased with the beauty and fragrance of the flower and carries the plant home with good hope. He keeps it for six months and it does not put forth one new leaf. Not a flower nor bud appears on its branches. The leaves begin to shrivel up and fall off. Going back to the florist he tells of his disappointment and the failure of the plant. Where does the fault lie? Is it the fault of the plant? Did not the florist tell the truth? The fault is with the purchaser himself. He has not studied and attended to the wants of the plant. He kept it in a room where there was no sun, and it required sunlight. It required water and a certain temperature, but these were not provided. The plant was a failure because the conditions of its nature and life were utterly disregarded.

In the Bible we have a description of Christianity and a picture of the flower and foliage it will bear. We have an actual specimen in Christ Jesus. The beauty of His peace and rest and holiness and the fragrance of His love please us. We resolve to accept Christianity as our hope and portion. But we fail to meet the required conditions of its growth in the soul. After a few months of trial we are disappointed, and our neighbors are disappointed in what they see in us. The requirements are all specifically and clearly stated in the Bible, but we have not studied them. We committed the blunder of supposing that this plant will come to its best by virtue of its own nature, whether we do our part or not. In every case where Christianity seems to be a failure it will be found that the failure was in the one who accepted it but did not obey its laws. Have we kept the commandments? Are we satisfied with our religious experience? Does the character which we bear produce a favorable effect on those who know us? Have we any reason to believe that they think more of Christ for having known us? If not, it is time to consider where we stand. Have we kept the commandments of God? Have we diligently studied them? Have we tried to know and do them? Are we willing to keep them? Do what the Lord says, and thou

shalt have peace, rest, strength, happiness, righteousness, and life.

Jesus and The Old Testament Exchange.

It was not to the Old Testament that Jesus objected, but to the interpretation which the Pharisees put upon it. They magnified its letter; Christ contended for its spirit. He did more to defend it than they did. He showed forth the fulfillment of its precepts, while the Pharisees only regarded it as their standard. Jesus plainly showed that while they clamored about their devotion to it, they were really ignorant of it. They were blinded by sinful self sufficiency. Those professing to be teachers of righteousness, they were yet entirely destitute of its great attributes, love charity and mercy. This is the new dispensation—the good news of the Gospel which Christ came to make known, and for the establishment and success of which he gave his life.

Suggestions Concerning the Prayer-Meeting

Rev. W. F. Crafts.

1. Be regular in attendance. (Heb 10: 25.)
2. Bring others. (Num. 10: 29)
3. Come praying. (John 12: 21; 15: 3.)
4. Continue in prayer. (Acts 1: 4, 14)
5. Avoid criticism. (Ps. 133: 1; Rom. 12: 10; John 17: 23)
6. Participate promptly and heartily in the exercises. (Col. 3: 16; II. Cor. 1: 11; Heb. 4: 16.)
7. Let all the exercises be brief. (Eccl. 5: 2.)
8. Keep in mind that we sing and speak before God. (II. Cor. 12: 19)

Missions

From the National Capital

On last Monday, April 29, I went to Dayton, Virginia, and remained there until May 2, preaching the first two nights with love feast on the third evening. I was also permitted to attend their business meeting on the afternoon preceding love feast. The brethren and sisters at this place have had many dark days in the past, but if I am not greatly mistaken, their future will reveal brighter days. And why should I not thus predict a promising future? It seems to me that when people are disposed to drop their temporal affairs in the midst of one of the busiest periods of the year to wait upon God and to seek spiritual blessings, surely good results must follow. All of the meetings were well attended, and the spirit of harmony and love manifested at the business session was very encouraging, indeed. We wish to return our best thanks to the brethren and sisters at Dayton for their kindness shown, and for their continual interest in our mission in the Capital city, and we pray that God's richest blessings may be upon them.

We have some more good news to report concerning the mission in Washington. On